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JPRS: 4542

19 April 1961

SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE ON WORKERS' LEISURE TIME
UNDER THE SHORTER WORKDAY

-USSR-

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FOREWORD

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JPRS: 4542

CSO: 1705-S

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UNDER THE SHORTER WORKDAY

Following is a translation of an article by L. Bibik and M. Markovich in Byulleten' Nauchnoy Informatsii Truda i Zarabotnaya Plata, (Bulletin of Scientific Information of Labor and Wages), No 12 (1960?), pages 49-52.

At the end of October 1960, in the city of Stalinsk, Kemerovskaya Oblast, a conference on the problem of "Workers' Free Time under the Conditions of the Shorter Workday" was conducted under the sponsorship of the Institute of Economics and Organization of Industrial Production of the Siberian section of the Academy of Sciences USSR and the Kemerovskaya Oblast Committee of the CPSU.

Members of the Academy of Sciences USSR, representatives of the VTsSPS (Vsesoyuznyy Tsentral'nyy Sovet Professional'nykh Soyuzov -- All Union Central Council of Trade Unions) and TsSU RSFSR (Tsentral'noye Statisticheskoye Upravleniye RSFSR -- Central Statistical Administration RSFSR), scholars, party members, Komsomol and trade union workers, production leaders of the Novosibirskaya, Kemerovskaya, Sverlovskaya, Irkutskaya, and Omskaya oblasts, Krasnoyarskiy, Altayskiy and Primorskiy Krays, the Lithuanian SSR, and co-workers of the Scientific Research Labor Institute took part in the work of the conference.

Twenty-six persons participated in plenary and section meetings. G. A. Prudenskiy, director of the Novosibirsk Institute of Economics and Organization of Industrial Production, of the Siberian Department of the Academy of Sciences USSR, presented a report on "The Workers' Free Time and the Shortening of the Workday".

Having remarked that at the present time, in 1960, in accordance with the decisions of the party and the government, about 50 million workers have shifted to a seven hour workday, and about six million to a four and a six hour day. Prudenskiy emphasized the fact that this was only the first stage in solving the problem of the shortened workday initiated by the 21st Congress of the CPSU.

The shorter workday and the workweek is a result of the gains of socialist economy and growth in the productivity of common labor, leads to an increase in leisure for the workers, leisure that is necessary for their cultural and professional growth, and for their over-all development. Such leisure resulting from the shortening of the workday also leads to an increase in the material well-being, since along with the shortening of the workday, wages are adjusted and increased for a considerable number of the

workers (especially those in the lower income brackets).

G. A. Prudenskiy pointed out that the increase in and a rational use of the Soviet workers' leisure is a vital problem in communist construction. It is an important task for the state, since the rapid growth in the spiritual culture of the people, a systematic rise in living standards, and an increase in productivity of common labor depend on the amount and method of utilizing leisure time. Continuous increases in leisure and improvement of its use are regular features of the period of gradual change from socialism to communism. Therefore, one of the present problems of economic science is the study of workers' leisure and of its utilization.

Leisure is defined as a part of that time during which is not spent on the job. This period of time, which includes a period of leisure, also includes the time spent on household and personal chores, time devoted to eating and sleeping, and time spent in going to and from one's job.

A considerable portion of the report was devoted to the questions of improvement of the workers' time-budget structure during the years of Soviet power, the necessity of conducting a systematic development of workers' time budgets by state statistical organs, and specific investigations by trade unions and other social organizations. Such investigations will aid in developing and putting into effect measures for improving the utilization of workers' leisure time.

Member-correspondent of the Academy of Sciences USSR M. T. Iovchuk (Department of Economic, Philosophical and Legal Sciences) gave a report on the theme "Communism and Culture". In this report he treated mainly the problem of proper utilization of leisure time in the interests of further growth in the workers' spiritual culture. Iovchuk pointed out the problems facing Soviet society in the matter of successfully raising the workers' cultural and professional level in connection with the shorter workday and workweek in the USSR. Labor is becoming an increasingly vital need of the Soviet people. This is reflected in the increase of their creative activity. Conditions necessary for the gradual obliteration of the essential difference between the workers' free and work time are being created. Of special significance in connection with this is the increase in workers' and peasants' knowledge to a level equal to that of specialists of secondary technical skill, the creation of conditions under which all workers may benefit from the fruits of spiritual culture, the liquidation of the remnants of cultural inequalities between city and village, and the perfection of the whole system of general, professional, and production and professional education.

A. I. Sidlyarenko, head of TsSU RSFSR, made public the results of a study of time budgets of worker families, engineering technicians and workers in Moscow and Novosibirsk. He gave participants of the conference information on the program and instruction used in a trial investigation conducted in September of 1959, and told of the results obtained in this investigation. He pointed out the differences between the time budget of workers in 1959 and 1924. He proposed using a permanent set of budgets of TsSU RSFSR as a basis for further expansion of time budget investigations.

V. D. Nikitin, secretary of the Kemerovskaya Oblast Party Committee,

and I. V. Ryabov, secretary of the oblast trade union council, told in their presentations how party and trade union organizations of the oblast struggle for an improvement of economic and material well-being of the workers of Kuzbass, as well as for a better utilization of their leisure. They demonstrated, using concrete examples, how the cultural and professional level of the Kuzbass industrial, office and professional workers grew in recent years.

V. G. Kozhevnikov, deputy chairman of the Kemerovskiy Sovnarkhoz told the conference about an experiment of transferring to a shortened workday which was conducted by various Kuzbass industries. He emphasized the fact that the change to a shorter workday was conducive to the growth of workers' productivity, and an increase of creative activity. The number of rationalizers and inventors increased considerably, and the struggle of the collectives for a higher production culture developed on a wider scale.

D. F. Fedorov and A. K. Lapenko, co-workers of the Institute of Economics of the Siberian division of the Academy of Sciences USSR, worked jointly on an experiment in the study of workers' time budgets in various cities of Siberia and the Urals. They noted that the results of the investigation give evidence of a great theoretical and practical significance in workers' time budget studies.

It was ascertained, for example, that as a result of an unusually large expenditure of time on household chores and commuting to and from work, the workers have very little free time left for relaxation, social work, self-improvement, and for increasing their skills and raising their cultural level.

Among the workers almost twice as much time is spent on household chores as on all types of relaxation.

At the conference a considerable amount of time was spent on the question of improving service in the workers' cultural and daily necessities, on which an increase in leisure time depends to a large degree. The following people spoke on this subject: Z. V. Kuz'mina, secretary of the Stalinsk City Council of the CPSU; A. R. Gorbunov, secretary of the Novosibirskaya Oblast Komsomol Committee; V. F. Parshin, section head of the VTsSPS; M. A. Arapov, instructor at the Kemerovsk Mining Institute. Using actual examples, these members of the conference showed how the regulation of transportation, public cafeterias, and cultural and daily needs influence the amount of free time.

R. A. Kartashova, a scientific worker of the Institute of Economics of the Siberian division of the Academy of Sciences USSR, reported on how, for the purpose of generalization of the experiment of work of communist labor collectives in mid-1959, the Institute of Economics and Industrial Production Organizations of the Siberian Department of the Academy of Sciences USSR conducted a selective investigation of time budgets of brigades at 12 industrial projects in Novosibirsk. Thirty brigades with a total of approximately 400 men were investigated.

An analysis of collected material showed that the majority of the brigade members were young people who had the necessary work experience. For example, in the brigades the average number of workers with specialized

work experience of more than five years was approximately 50%. Forty-eight percent of the members of the brigades surveyed completed seven year schools; 18.5% graduated from general or technical high schools.

Of the groups surveyed 22.5% were enrolled in schools for young workers, 8.5% in technical schools, 7% in institutes, 6% in political education groups, and 7% in miscellaneous courses.

According to data yielded by photographs of the workers' day shown at the conference, work time is used more productively in the communist labor brigades than in other brigades.

Among members of the communist brigades the organization of time after work is more rational than that of the other workers.

The members of communist labor brigades spend almost four times more time on studies, five times more time on social work, two times more time on reading newspapers and other literature, over three times more on movie and theatre going than the other workers.

S. P. Ageyev, head of the mine "Polysayevskaya-2" (city of Leninsk-Kuznetsk), spoke on the necessity of a more rational use of time after work, which at present constitutes 75% of the calendar year.

He remarked that up until the present time the miners spent a considerable amount of time on commuting to and from work.

Especially significant was the amount of time after work spent in connection with the miners presence on the job. The workers' stay at the mine was shortened by more than 40 minutes for every 24 hours as a result of timing the process of issuing work clothes, the introduction of self-service in the lamp room, bath, and wardrobe, the regulation of order in the personal service shop.

Measures have now been worked out at the mine for the further shortening of time connected with actual presence at the production site. The development of a stable bus schedule from the mine to downtown and from the mine to other areas was carried out. Also planned is the introduction of a passenger train from the shaft to the place of work, the regulation of a subway schedule, and the extension of the shaft elevator from one level to two levels.

Two sections were organized for the examination of the experiment of rational use of time after work and improvement of the servicing of the workers' cultural and daily needs, and the methods of studying workers' after work time.

In the first section special attention was devoted to the problems of the first experiment, the work of the communist labor brigades, which used their free time more rationally; the second section was occupied with the problems of methods of studying time budgeting.

Advice on studying workers' time budgeting was given by M. B. Markovich (Scientific Labor Research Institute), Moscow. A report by L. F. Bibik (Scientific Labor Research Institute, Moscow) on the preliminary results of a time budget study of collective farm workers in the Altayskiy Kray and Khersonskiy oblast was also heard.

Academician M. B. Mitin, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party USSR; and L. I. Lubennikov, first secretary of the Kemerovskiy Oblast Party Committee also took part in the conference.

The conference arrived at the following conclusion -- to conduct systematic studies of work time and leisure time of the workers, using for this purpose social organizations and government statistical organs.

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